

**PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN INDIA****Kamble Mohan S, Ph.D.**

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Abstract

Although there have been challenges to Teacher education in the past, these most recent calls for reform may provoke a fundamental change in Teacher education. This change may not occur as a direct response to calls for greater transparency and accountability, but rather because of the opportunity to reflect on the purpose of Teacher education, the role of colleges and universities in the new millennium, and emerging scientific research on how people learn. These disparate literatures have not been tied together in a way that would examine the impact of fundamental change from the policy level to the institutional level and to the everyday lives of college and university administrators, faculty and students. Now the time has come to create a second wave of institution building and of excellence in the fields of education, research and capability building. We need Teacher educated people who are skilled and who can drive our economy forward. When India can provide skilled people to the outside world then we can transfer our country from a developing nation to a developed nation very easily and quickly.



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Introduction:

Our university system is, in many parts, in a state of disrepair...In almost half the districts in the country, higher education enrollments are abysmally low, almost two-third of our universities and 90 per cent of our colleges are rated as below average on quality parameters... I am concerned that in many states university appointments, including that of vice-chancellors, have been politicised and have become subject to caste and communal considerations, there are complaints of favouritism and corruption.

– Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in 2007.

India's higher education system is the world's third largest in terms of students, next to China and the United States. Unlike China, however, India has the advantage of English being the primary language of higher education and research.

Critical appraisals undertaken by the governmental committees and independent academicians have highlighted the crisis confronting the system: 'increasing educated unemployment; weakening of student motivation; increasing unrest and indiscipline on the campuses; frequent collapse of administration; deterioration of standards; and above all, the demoralizing effect of the irrelevance and purposelessness of most of what is being done.' While the politicians and policy makers have often spoken about the need for radical reconstruction of the system, what has been achieved in reality is only moderate reformism. At present, the world-class institutions in India are mainly limited. Most of the Indian

colleges and universities lack in high-end research facilities. The emergence of a worldwide economic order has immense consequences for higher education more so under the changes that have taken place in the recent past with regard to globalization, industrialization, information technology advancement and its impact on education aided to these are the policy changes that have taken place at the UGC, All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Distance Education Council (DEC), Indian Council for Agriculture Research (ICAR), Bar Council of India (BCI), National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI), Medical Council of India (MCI), Pharmacy Council of India (PCI), Indian Nursing Council (INC), Dentist Council of India (DCI), Central Council of Homeopathy (CCH), the Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM) and such other regulatory bodies from time to time to accommodate these development and yet maintain quality students in higher education. It is time for all those who are concerned with policymaking, planning, administration and implementation of Higher Education to revitalize the very thinking on the subject and put it on the right track.

Suggestions for improving quality of Teacher Education

There are some suggestions and Expectations from Government, Industry, Educational Institutions, Parents and Students for improving quality of teacher education-

1. Towards a Learning Society-

As we move towards a learning society, every human activity will require contributions from experts, and this will place the entire sector of Teacher education in sharp focus. Although the priorities, which are being assigned today to the task of Education for All, will continue to be preponderant, the country will have to prepare itself to invest more and more on Teacher education and, simultaneously, measures will have to be taken to refine, diversify and upgrade Teacher education and research programmes.

2. Industry and Academia Connection-

Industry and Academia connect necessary to ensure curriculum and skills in line with requirements. Skill building is really very crucial to ensure employability of academia to understand and make sure good jobs (keeping in view knowledge + skills+ global professional skills = good jobs).

3. Incentives to Teachers and Researchers-

Industry and students are expecting specialized courses to be offered so that they get the latest and best in education and they are also industry ready and employable. Vocational and Diploma courses need to be made more attractive to facilitate specialized programs being offered to students. Incentives should be provided to teachers and researchers to make these professions more attractive for the younger generation.

4. Innovative Practices-

The new technologies offer vast opportunities for progress in all walks of life. It offers opportunities for economic growth, improved health, better service delivery, improved learning and socio-cultural advances.

5. To mobilize resources-

The decline in public funding in the last two plan periods has resulted in serious effects on standards due to increasing costs on non-salary items and emoluments of staff, on the one hand, and declining resources, on the other. Effective measures will have to be adopted to mobilize resources for Teacher education. There is also a need to relate the fee structure to

the student's capacity to pay for the cost. So that, students at lower economic levels can be given highly subsidised and fully subsidised education.

6. Coming of Information Age-

The world is entering into an Information Age and developments in communication, information and technology will open up new and cost-effective approaches for providing the reach of Teacher education to the youth as well as to those who need continuing education for meeting the demands of explosion of information, fast-changing nature of occupations, and lifelong education.

7. Student-Centred Education and Dynamic Methods-

Methods of Teacher education also have to be appropriate to the needs of learning to learn, learning to do, learning to be and learning to become. Student-centred education and employment of dynamic methods of education will require from teachers new attitudes and new skills.

8. Public Private Partnership-

PPP is most essential to bring in quality in the Teacher education system. Governments can ensure PPP through an appropriate policy. University Grants Commission and Ministry of HRD should play a major role in developing a purposeful interface between the Universities, Industries and National Research Laboratories (NRLs) as a step towards PPP.

9. To Provide Need Based Job-Oriented Courses-

All round development of personality is the purpose of education. But the present day education is neither imparting true knowledge of life and nor improving the talent of a student by which one can achieve laurels in the field one is interested. So, combination of arts subjects and computer science and science and humanities or literature should be introduced so that such courses could be useful for the students to do jobs after recruitment in some companies which would reduce unnecessary rush to Teacher education.

10. International Cooperation-

Universities in India have been a primary conduit for the advancement and transmission of knowledge through traditional functions such as research, innovation, teaching, human resource development, and continuing education. International cooperation is gaining importance as yet another function. With the increased development of transport and communication, the global village is witnessing a growing emphasis on international cooperation and action to find satisfactory solutions to problems that have global dimensions and Teacher education is one of them.

11. Towards a New vision-

India realizes, like other nations of the world, that humanity stands today at the head of a new age of a large synthesis of knowledge, and that the East and the West have to collaborate in bringing about concerted action for universal upliftment, and lasting peace and unity.

12. Cross Culture Programmes-

After education, tour to all the places in India and world as far as possible with the cooperation of government is necessary so that one can understand about people, culture, arts, literature, religions, technological developments and progress of human society in the world.

13. Action Plan for Improving Quality-

Academic and administrative audit should be conducted once in three years in colleges by external experts for ensuring quality in all aspects of academic activities. The self-finance

colleges should come forward for accreditation and fulfill the requirements of accreditation. Universities and colleges should realise the need for quality education and come forward with action plan for improving quality in Teacher educational institutions.

14. Individuality-

The life of one will not be interesting but rather boring, monotonous and frustrating. This is mainly due to parental interference in the education of the children. Parental guidance is necessary but it should not interfere in the creativity or individuality of the students. Teacher education is necessary for one to achieve excellence in the line one is best. But one should be selected for Teacher education on the basis of merit only. Further, fees for education in general should not be high; especially, the fees for Teacher studies should be within the reach of every class of people in the nation.

15. Privatization of Teacher Education-

In any nation education is the basic necessity for the socio-economic development of the individuals and the society. In reality only 20% of the population is educated in India. So, improved standard of education as first priority should be offered to the majority by the govt. authorities with sincere political will. Also, privatization of Teacher education is absolutely necessary in a vast country like India as government alone is helpless to do so.

16. Quality development-

Quality depends on its all functions and activities: teaching and academic programs, research and scholarship, staffing, students, building, facilities, equipments, services to the community and the academic environment. It also requires that Teacher education should be characterized by its international dimensions: exchange of knowledge, interactive networking, mobility of teachers and students and international research projects, while taking into account the national cultural values and circumstances.

17. World Class Education-

Indian government is not giving priority to the development of Standard in education. India should aspire for the international standard in education. Many national universities like in the USA, UK, Australia, etc. allow studies in Teacher education for foreign students in their countries and through correspondence courses as well. In the same way India Universities of world class education can also offer courses of studies to foreign students taking advantage of the globalization process. To achieve that goal it should adopt uniform international syllabus in its educational institutions.

18. Personality Development-

Finally, education should be for the flowering of personality but not for the suppression of creativity or natural skill. In the globalized world opportunities for the educated people are naturally ample in scope. As a result business process outsourcing (BPO) activities have increased competition in the world trade leading towards the production of quality goods and their easy availability everywhere in the world market. That is the way the world can be developed for peace, prosperity and progress by able and skilful men.

19. Status of Academic Research Studies-

If we see the number of researchers engaged in Research and Development activities as compared to other countries we find that we have merely 119 researchers, whereas Japan has 5287 and US has 4484 researchers per million of population.

20. Stipends to Research Fellows-

The number of Ph.Ds from Indian Universities should increase with proper standards. This should be seen in the context of extremely low fraction of Ph.Ds in India in relation to M.Sc./B.Tech., as compared to what it is in USA, UK, Germany, Japan etc.

21. Fair Quality Assurance System-

Colleges and Private institutes should set up Internal Quality Assurance Cell and must follow a minimum standard to give degrees. The quality assurance system must be independent of political and institutional interaction and it must have a basis in the legislation. There should be operational, financial and academic autonomy coupled with accountability.

22. To increase Quantity of Universities-

We need more universities because we are more in number and present number of universities is too less. On 13th June, 2005 Government of India constituted a high level advisory body known as National Knowledge Commission (NKC) to advise the PM about the state of education in India and measures needed to reform this sector. It was headed by Sam Pitroda and submitted its report in November 2007. NKC has recommended setting up of 1500 universities by 2015 so that gross enrollment ratio increases to 15 percent. It has also called for establishing an Independent Regulatory Authority for Teacher Education (IRAHE) to monitor the quality of overall Teacher education in India.

23. Examination Reforms-

Examination reforms, gradually shifting from the terminal, annual and semester examinations to regular and continuous assessment of student's performance in learning should be implemented

24. High-tech Libraries-

Our university libraries have a very good collection of books, but they are all in mess. A library must be online and conducive for serious study. Indian universities should concentrate more on providing quality education which is comparable to that of international standards.

Conclusion

After independence, there has been tremendous increase in institutions of Teacher learning in all disciplines. But with the quantitative growth has it been able to attend to the core issue of quality. India is today one of the fastest developing countries of the world with the annual growth rate going above 9%. In order to sustain that rate of growth, there is need to increase the number of institutes and also the quality of Teacher education in India. To reach and achieve the future requirements there is an urgent need to relook at the Financial Resources, Access and Equity, Quality Standards, Relevance and at the end the Responsiveness. To attain and sustain national, regional or international quality, certain components are particularly relevant, notably careful selection of staff and continuous staff development, in particular through the promotion of appropriate programs for academic development, including teaching/learning methodology and mobility between countries, between Teacher education institutions and the world of work, as well as student mobility within and between countries. Internal self-evaluation and external review must be conducted openly by independent specialists, if possible with international experts.

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